2020
2nd Quarter
April – June 2020

Buddhist & Pāli College of Singapore Alumni (BPCA) - Quarterly E-Bulletin

Key Events

Past Activities

* Death Anniversary of Ven. Gnanarama *(Pg 1)*

* Vesak Day Celebration(Pg10)

Upcoming Activities

* Introduction to Buddhism Course in English (Pg9)

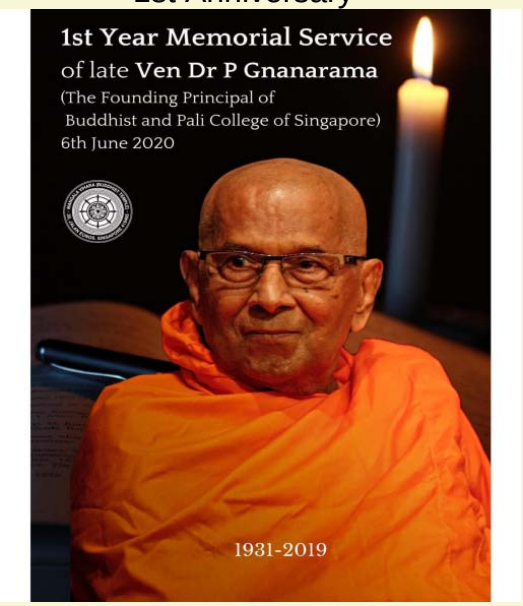
* Introduction to Buddhism Course in Chinese (Pg8)

*Diploma in Buddhism 2020/21 (Pg 7)

In Memoriam - Death Anniversary of

Venerable Dr. Pategama Gnanarama Anu-Nāyaka Mahāthera

6th December 1931- 4th June 2019
1st Anniversary


1st Year Memorial Service
of late Ven Dr P Gnanarama
(The Founding Principal of
Buddhist and Pali College of Singapore)
6th June 2020
1931-2019

4th June 2019 marks 1 year since the passing of Bhante P Gnanarama (1931-2019), a dedicated Dhamma teacher who left an indelible mark on the lives of those who had the opportunity to learn from him.

Tributes poured in from many venerables, teachers and students, whose lives had been touched by the late Venerable Gnanarama.

You may view their tributes at the following links:
https://www.facebook.com/324322291524562/posts/606798319943623/?vh=e&d=n

It was posted to BPC YouTube channel:
https://www.facebook.com/324322291524562/posts/608652103091578/?d=n

Learning during Outbreak

Amid the global coronavirus lockdown and social distancing, Pali College too has moved to online learning. It is a new experience for many teachers and students. We have taken this opportunity to ask our teachers and students to share their challenges and practical tips on learning and engaging students in online learning.

I like that I now spend lesser time travelling. However, I cannot see students' non-verbal response.

To me, new normal = new habit. Nothing constant but change. To cling and not wanting to change is basically dukkha.

Teacher Wahyu
Diploma Class
Pali

Teacher Jasmine Tan

Diploma class at MV -

Early History of Bm

*"I would prefer to have face-to-face lessons in a classroom. In virtual setting, there is no **eyeball interactions** and it is impersonal. Though students may sign-in classes, I'm not sure if I get their **full attention**.*

*With physical classroom, students learn in a **spiritual environment** which benefits both temple n students.*

***Wifi signals** in residential areas can be bad and lesson becomes choppy. We are teaching religion and it should be taught with a human touch. Virtual lessons should only be on a "no-choice" basis.*

Teacher Bhagya Jean Lau

Diploma Class
GETB

*Zoom features are sufficient. Bro Patrick and Bro Kit (class rep) have been doing a great job in **helping teachers** and students to use the app. It is also good for teachers to send lesson notes to students in advance so that they can follow the online lessons better.*

Likes:

*a) Save a lot of **travelling time**.*
*b) Students ask a lot more questions as they can type questions into the chat room, not detered by **shyness**.*

Dislikes:

*a) Can't see **reactions** of students, hence unable to gauge their understanding of the lessons and make adjustments accordingly.*
*b) Face to face meeting builds **better rapport** between teacher & students and amongst students.*

I endorse Zoom classes for this period. When COVID-19 situation is settled down, face to face lessons are still preferred. If we wish to move our lessons online, there must be a few face to face lessons in a course year and some relevant outings. For BC302; class visits to museums, going for Buddhst film fest etc led by lecturer can help overcome the weaknesses of online course.

I think students have different methods of studying. I would prefer to have the lecture notes in advance, as in the case of GETB, so that I could write additional examples or info on the notes itself, and highlight the notes as I go along.

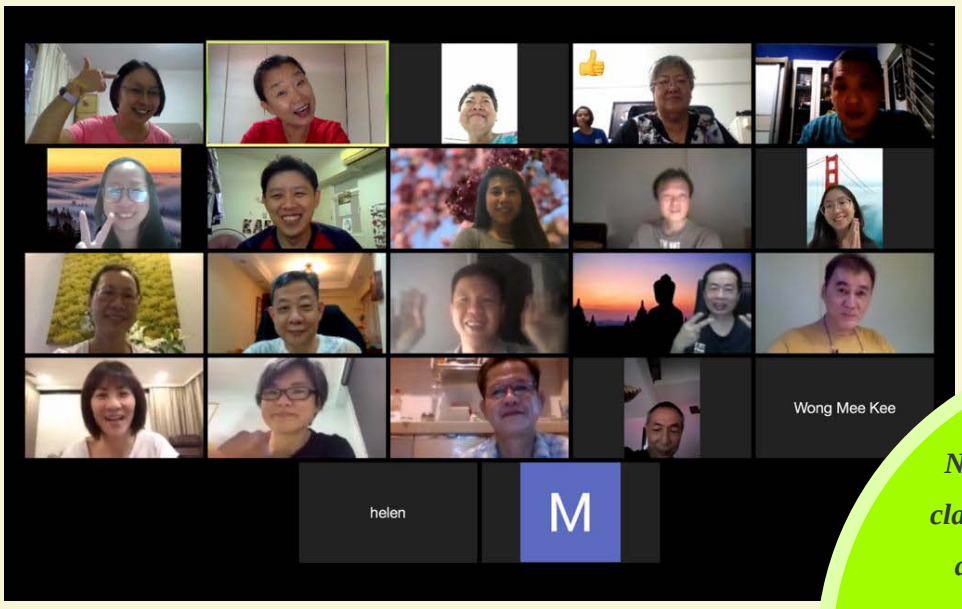
Lay Tin Lee

Diploma- Mangala Vihara

Class Rep: Brother Kit

I am perfectly happy with (lessons conducted on) Zoom. I Can see and hear well, with no distractions. I am more attentive and can concentrate better. However, I miss interaction with teachers and classmates.

Sister Seah Kim Tee



Diploma- PMT

Class Reps: Sister Judy & Brother Kwok Fook Sing

Not in replacement of physical classes but as an added option. It allows people who need to be away from the country esp for an extended period to continue their learning journey. It also provides people with mobility challenges the opportunity to attend classes ..

GAQ

At the initial stage, we had to run some trials to ensure that everyone knows how to log in using Zoom and navigate the functions. A handful of classmates found it ***difficult to adapt*** *at the start as we were not used to attending lessons online but subsequently, we were able to use the Chat Function to* ***clarify and ask*** *questions. Some lecturers shared their* ***PowerPoint slides*** *online or used* ***Whiteboard*** *as their teaching aid. This is very helpful.*

After about 4 months of online learning, I conclude that I prefer physical lessons. It is challenging to stay focus after a day of video conference / meeting for work, thus without physical interactions, it is easy to ***drift off*** *during class. But given the current pandemic threat, learning without contact online is our best bet that* ***avoid disruption*** *to the lessons.*

Sister Jasline Hema Lin

Class Rep:

Sister Jaslin Hema Lin

BA 1

Class BA1 2020 is special. Due to Covid-19, we have moved our learning to online. We started our first Zoom lesson on 22nd March 2020. Soon after, our BPC Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia BA1 classmates joined our class on 12th April 2020. There are a total of 4 students and 1 coordinator from our Malaysian Counterpart who have been joining our lessons punctually.

We are no strangers to Online meetings. However, to do virtual teaching and learning is a very new experience for all of us. There were some ground rules that we felt were necessary to set as lessons went along.

To start with, being **punctual** for all classes is a respect we should have for the lecturers and classmates who make time for the lessons.

Being **attentive** and not be distracted in class is essential for our learning. In order for the lecturers not to be disturbed during lessons, we have now built a common understanding to turn off mic and video to reduce disturbances.

Although we classmates and lecturers can't see each other, we are focused, concentrated and disciplined. We should also **avoid multi-tasking** in class, eg. reading emails and WhatsApp from work during lesson.

We do feel that some of our **lecturers** are feeling a **little disheartened** and **disconnected** in class as they are unable to get immediate response from the students when they set queries for the class. We would still like to cheer them on for they have been doing a great job.

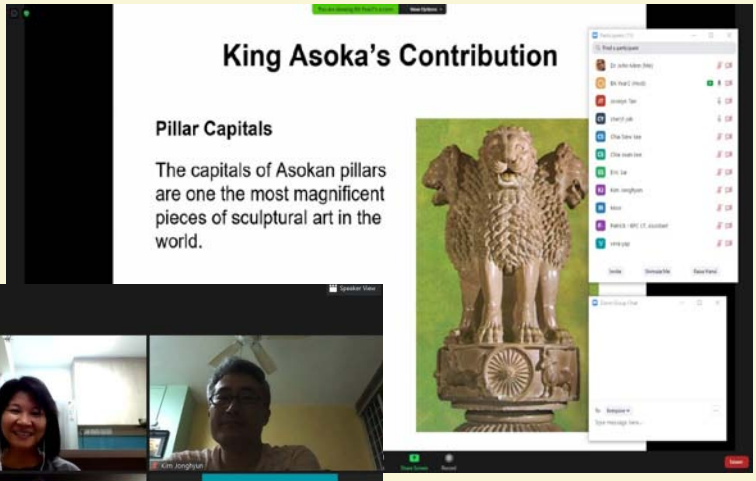
Through this Circuit Breaker period, we have been forced to tread into unchartered territory. We have now experienced 4 months of online learning and have benefited greatly from it. Many of us who would otherwise have to miss classes due to health or other commitment issues, are given the opportunity to attend both to our external commitments and the lessons at the same time.

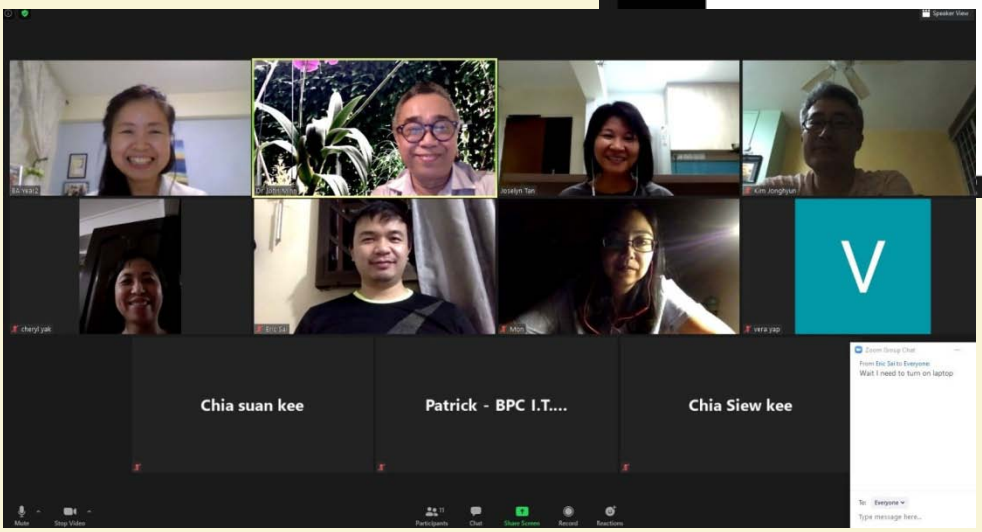
Furthermore, attending lessons online saves us time and energy travelling to and from classes. This allows us to concentrate better in class too.

Overall, we feel that it is convenient and effective in this new norm. We would certainly hope that Pali College continues to give students and teachers the flexibility to attend classes virtually or physically as this may save traveling time and encourage more regular attendance. More importantly, this mode of teaching is able to **reach out** to more students, hopefully reducing the **barriers to learning**.

Class Rep: Chan Lee Hoon

BA 2


King Asoka's Contribution
Pillar Capitals
The capitals of Asokan pillars are one the most magnificent pieces of sculptural art in the world.



Despite challenges during Covid 19, every classmate makes an effort to attend the lesson. 'I am encouraged to see the maximum number of participants in the class each week during these few months of zoom lessons.' quoted from a teacher. How else can we repay the kindness of our teachers who have contributed so much to our learning journey?

We are motivated to learn Dhamma for the pursuit of the Truth and wisdom. In the process, we see the love and giving spirits of our teachers. Most of our teachers are new to online teaching.

They had to overcome the challenges of using the applications and technology. On top of this, the teachers now have to prepare notes appropriate for online teaching, which add on to their work load. Their spirit of giving and kindness touched our hearts.

We have definitely missed the interactions and rapport that we get from physical classrooms. Nonetheless, we are grateful to the Committee of Pali College, teachers and our classmates, for relentlessly

Class Rep: Brother John Minn

*We would like to thank **Brother Patrick Lim**, who is also the Technical Advisor to our College, and **Kelly Nai** for the Dana subscriptions to 5 Zoom accounts to facilitate the learning process.*

Sadhu Sadhu Sadhu!

Pause & Ponder... watch your breath

Siha! I need help! Due to this pandemic, everything changed!
What happened, Lin?
2001
Job
Freedom
Living in the Present
Bhaddekaratta Sutta (MN 131)
In the past, I used to have a house, friends, a lovely family, a job, business, investments, savings, excellent food, and even freedom, but now everything is gone! I have nothing now, truly nothing.
And what does the future hold for us?!
Will there be a job? Will I still have a house? Will there be an economic crisis? Will my country collapse? Will there be war? Will there be freedom and rights? Will my family and friends die? Will I die?
Listen well, Lin, worry about the past, and constant thinking of the future does not do any good.
One should **live in the present moment** instead.
Evey mindful moment is an auspicious moment.
Thus Instead of fear or worrying, we should be **mindful of our actions, our feelings, our thoughts, and our mental states.**
What matters is the present moment, as it is now that determines the future. Worrying does not change the past.
We also cannot control the whole world.

Still Breathing???

So what should I do now Siha?
What should I focus on?
Remember Lin, when we take refuge in the world, are expecting certain outcomes, and we think we are in control. But **we will always face dissatisfaction because the world will always be uncertain**. Everything is impermanent. Even when this pandemic ends, we will still be dissatisfied with other new things and situations.
Gradually we will find that happiness is actually in our own mind. **By having gratitude, contentment, mindfulness, compassion, wholesome mental states, etc., we can be happy.**
Finally, not everything is purely about me, mine, and only about myself and my ego. By helping people as much as we can, and **with mindfulness and a mind of contentment, compassion, and equanimity, we gain peace and tranquility.**
Thus one should **take refuge in oneself instead. By understanding these teachings and practising them, we can overcome all uncertainties and challenges in the world.**
"You shouldn't chase after the past or place expectations on the future.
What is past is left behind. The future is as yet unreached.
Whatever quality is present you clearly see right there, right there.
Not taken in, unshaken, that's how you develop the heart.
Ardently doing what should be done today, for—who knows?—tomorrow death.
There is no bargaining with Mortality & his mighty horde.
Whoever lives thus ardently, relentlessly both day & night, has truly had an auspicious day: so says the Peaceful Sage."
Present
Moment

Advertorial:

Introduction to Buddhism Course

August 2020 (20th Intake)

* How much do you know about Buddhism?
* Are you a knowledgeable Buddhist?
* What is the essence of Buddhism?
* Do you know how to practise Buddhism?

Course Details :

Course Date : 5 August to 30 September 2020 (9 weeks)

Frequency : Every Wednesday 7.30pm to 9.30pm

Venue : Mangala Vihara Buddhist Temple
30 Jalan Eunos, S'pore 419495 (Opposite Eunos MRT)

Course Fees : By donation

Email : Intro2buddhismbpca@gmail.com

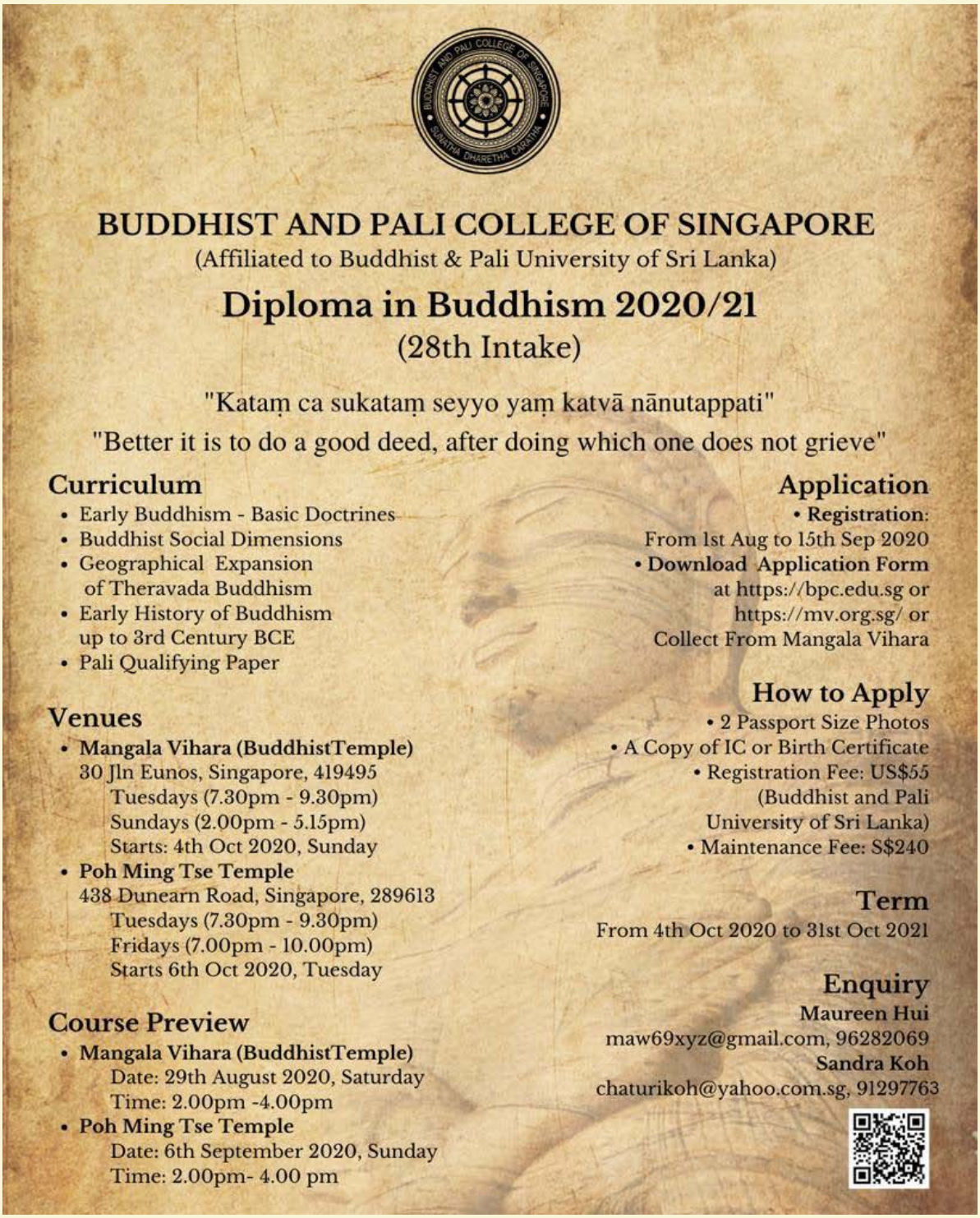
Telephone : Sis. Lynn @ 8288 9888

Instructors : By experienced Dhamma Teachers

Topics are covered in plain and simple language and include:
The Freedom of Inquiry in Buddhism, the Life of the Buddha, the 3 Characteristics of Existence, the 4 Noble Truths and the Noble 8 Fold Path, Rebirth and Kamma, the Buddhist Texts, How to Practise Buddhism, the Different Buddhist Traditions, the Meaning of Common Buddhist Rituals and Chanting, Buddhist Meditation.

Organized by the Buddhist & Pali College of Singapore

Advertorial:


BUDDHIST AND PALI COLLEGE OF SINGAPORE
(Affiliated to Buddhist & Pali University of Sri Lanka)
Diploma in Buddhism 2020/21
(28th Intake)
"Kataṃ ca sukataṃ seyyo yaṃ katvā nānutappati"
"Better it is to do a good deed, after doing which one does not grieve"
Curriculum
• Early Buddhism - Basic Doctrines
• Buddhist Social Dimensions
• Geographical Expansion of Theravada Buddhism
• Early History of Buddhism up to 3rd Century BCE
• Pali Qualifying Paper
Venues
• Mangala Vihara (BuddhistTemple)
30 Jln Eunos, Singapore, 419495
Tuesdays (7.30pm - 9.30pm)
Sundays (2.00pm - 5.15pm)
Starts: 4th Oct 2020, Sunday
• Poh Ming Tse Temple
438 Dunearn Road, Singapore, 289613
Tuesdays (7.30pm - 9.30pm)
Fridays (7.00pm - 10.00pm)
Starts 6th Oct 2020, Tuesday
Course Preview
• Mangala Vihara (BuddhistTemple)
Date: 29th August 2020, Saturday
Time: 2.00pm -4.00pm
• Poh Ming Tse Temple
Date: 6th September 2020, Sunday
Time: 2.00pm- 4.00 pm
Application
• Registration:
From 1st Aug to 15th Sep 2020
• Download Application Form
at https://bpc.edu.sg or
https://mv.org.sg/ or
Collect From Mangala Vihara
How to Apply
• 2 Passport Size Photos
• A Copy of IC or Birth Certificate
• Registration Fee: US$55
(Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka)
• Maintenance Fee: S$240
Term
From 4th Oct 2020 to 31st Oct 2021
Enquiry
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maw69xyz@gmail.com, 96282069
Sandra Koh
chaturikoh@yahoo.com.sg, 91297763

Thank you to ***Sister Cheong Beng Cheng*** *who been sponsoring this advertisements in The Straits Times in the past years. This generosity is given from the heart in appreciation of Dharma, it is a gift that supports not only the work of spreading the Teaching of Buddha, but also one's own practice.* ***Saddhu Saddhu Saddhu!***

Advertorial:

Current School Activities

All Buddhist Pali Courses

All courses are being carried out via online platform- Zoom Video Communication until further notice.

Upcoming Activities

Introduction to Buddhism Course (see advertorial)

Course commencing on 5th August 2020,

Wednesday 7.30pm-9.30pm

Diploma in Buddhism 2020/ 21 (28th Intake)

Course Preview will be conducted at 2 locations: (see advertorial)

1) Mangala Vihara (Buddhist Temple) on 29th August 2020, Saturday, 2.00pm- 4.00pm

2) Poh Ming Tse Temple on 6th September 2020, Sunday, 2.00pm- 4.00pm

Buddhist Introductory Course (In Chinese)

Course starting on 7th October 2020,

Wednesday 7.30pm- 9.30pm (See advertorial)

Vesak Day Celebration

Year 2020 due to COVID-19 circuit breaker, the yearly Vesak Day celebration was not opened to public. There was an in-house celebration hosted by the resident monks of Mangala Vihara.

TaiChi for beginners

All organized activities have been suspended from 27 March 2020 till further notice.

For more information, please contact

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